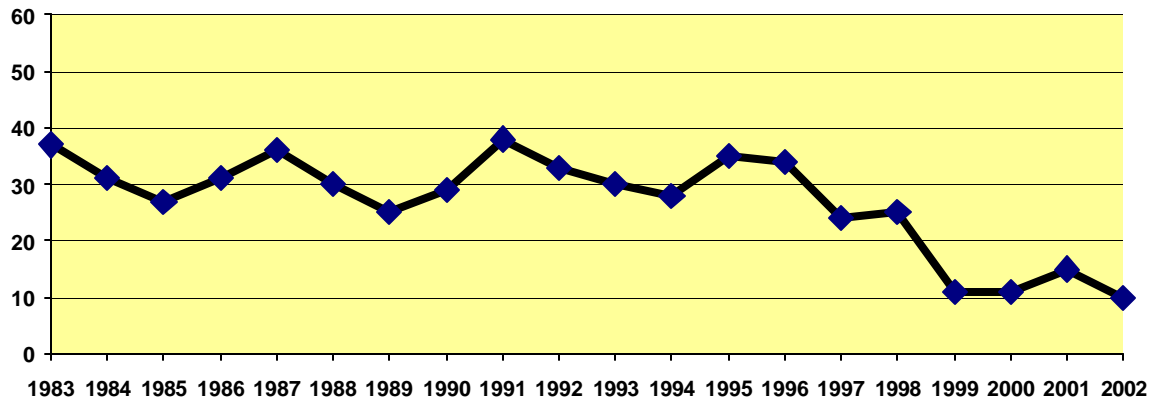
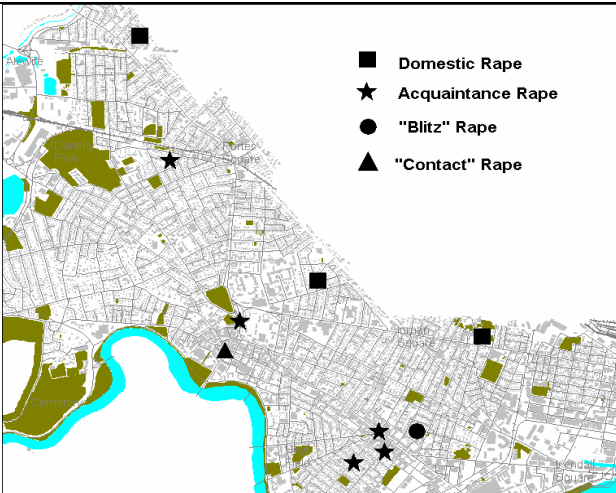


RAPE

Forcible Rape, as defined by the Uniform Crime Reporting Program is the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force, and assaults with the intent to commit rape, are also included; however, statutory rape (without force) and other sex offenses are excluded.



15 reported in 2001 · 10 reported in 2002



Rape in 2002

The Cambridge Police Department's Sexual Assault Unit reports that eight rapes and two attempted rapes were reported in Cambridge in 2002. This represents a 33 percent decrease from 2001. In nine of the ten incidents (8 rapes, 2 attempts), the victim knew his/her assailant; in the remaining incident, the aggressor was a stranger to the victim. The Sexual Assault Unit reports that nine of the cases have been cleared by arrest or indictment.

	Acq.	Cont.	Blitz	Dom.	Total
Complete	4	0	1	3	8
Attempt	1	1	0	0	2
Total	5	1	1	3	10

Acquaintance Rapes are non-domestic rapes committed by someone who knows the victim. They include rapes of co-workers, schoolmates, friends, and other acquaintances, including "date rapes."

Blitz Rapes are stranger rapes in which the rapist assaults the victim on the street with no prior contact. Generally, the suspect "comes out of nowhere." One such rape was reported in 2002 that occurred when the male culprit approached his female victim and asked her for a cigarette. The male stated he had a gun, although one was not shown, and forced the victim into a parking garage where he repeatedly raped her.

Contact Rapes are stranger rapes in which the suspect contacts the victim and tries to gain his/her confidence before assaulting him/her. Contact rapists typically pick up their victims in bars, lure them into their cars or houses, or otherwise try to coerce the victim into a situation in which they can begin their assault.

Domestic Rapes involve rapes between spouses, romantic partners, and family members.

The 2002 rape total of 10 was the lowest number recorded by this department over the past twenty-five years. The last time numbers this low were registered was during 1999 and 2000, where each year reported 11 rapes, coming in at a close second to 2002's record low numbers. We hesitate to call this a trend, however, given the tendency of rape statistics to fluctuate greatly from year to year (see the graph on the previous page). The number of rapes that go unreported each year is uncertain; experts estimate that as high as 50 percent of domestic and acquaintance rapes are not reported by the victim.

Of the four categorizations reported in 2002, the Blitz rape, or "street rape," is the classification that probably provokes the most fear in the average citizen. Only one of these categories of a rape was reported in 2002, which illustrates that in the majority of circumstances, the victim knows his/her assailant, as was the case in the remaining nine incidents over the past year.

Analysis of the Blitz Rapes reported in Cambridge over the past several years shows a trend of early morning (12:00 A.M. to 4:00 A.M.) weekend occurrences, as was also the case for this year's solo blitz rape. In past years, such as in 1997, clusters of these stranger rapes have appeared around Central Square, despite extra patrol allocation.

Rape around the Region & Nation

In 2001*, cities between 94,000 and 106,000 reported an average of 35 rapes per 100,000 residents. Cambridge reported 15 per 100,000 residents, which is considerably below the national average. The highest reporting city was Midland, TX, with 91 rapes per 100,000 people; the city with the lowest rate was Cary, NC with 5 rapes.

The FBI reported a .03 percent decrease in reported rape across the nation between 2000 and 2001 for cities with populations between those of 94,000 and 106,000 people. The national trend over the past five years, since 1997, has experienced an eleven percent decrease. Like the Cambridge Police Department, the FBI cautions that a significant portion of rapes go unrecorded, making the validity of the statistics uncertain.

Locally, cities with populations that approximate Cambridge reported an average of 26 rapes per 100,000 residents, which is significantly above Cambridge's total. These cities include Brockton (58 per 1,000), Fall River (43), Lowell (37), Lynn (16), New Bedford (63), Newton (1), and Quincy (31).

**National and Regional Statistics for 2002 are not yet available*

PREVENTING RAPE

- The Cambridge Police Department offers a *Rape Aggression Defense* (R.A.D.) course for women seeking to learn how to physically protect themselves against rape and other forms of violence. The course is free and is taught by a certified R.A.D. instructor. For more information, call the Cambridge Police Department's Community Relations Department at (617) 349-6009.
- Be aware of your surroundings when walking down the street. Walk briskly and confidently.
- At night, try to avoid walking alone, particularly after 9:00 P.M. Stick to main streets with as much car and foot traffic as possible. Avoid public parks, areas with excessive trees and bushes, dark streets and alleys, and other "shortcuts."
- Keep an arm's length away from strangers. If you think someone suspicious is approaching you or following you, cross to the other side of the street and head for the nearest public place.
- Know which stores and other public places are open along your route. Whether walking home, to work, or jogging, try to vary your route frequently.
- When streets are sparsely populated, make brief eye contact with people as you pass them.
- When parking at night, try to park in well-lit spots. Lock your car door and, when returning to your car, have your keys ready.
- Never hitchhike or pick up hitchhikers.
- Know the full name of each person you date, his occupation, and where he lives.
- Never invite a person whom you have met on the street, in a bar, or in another public place to be alone with you.
- If you are a victim of rape, report the crime. Counseling, shelters, and other services are available for you, and you may prevent another person from being victimized.
- The Cambridge Rape Crisis Center is available (617) 492-7273. The Rape Crisis Center supports a 24-hour hotline, support groups, one-on-one counseling, and community education programs. All its services are free.